

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 EUR-10 AID-10

PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 EA-13

ADP-00 IGA-01 RSR-01 /083 W

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R 021219Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9856

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 5319

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CENTO, MARR, PK

SUBJ: PAKISTAN AND CENTO

REF: STATE 123406 AND 122987 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: AZIZ AHMED EXPRESSED CONTINUING RESERVATIONS ABOUT PAK MEMBERSHIP IN CENTO. HE SAID ACID TEST FOR PAKISTAN WAS WHETHER US WOULD EXTEND MILITARY AID. TAKING HIS USUAL HARD-LINE POSITION ON SOVIET INTENTIONS, AHMED EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT EFFORTS TOWARD US-USSR DETENTE WOULD EFFECTIVELY DETER MOSCOW FROM PROMOTING ITS EFFORT TO ACHIEVE HEGEMONY OVER SOUTH ASIA. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MEETING JULY 2 WITH AZIZ AHMED, GOP MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CHARGE ASKED HOW AHMED VIEWED OUTCOME OF RECENT CENTO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING WHICH HE HAD ATTENDED IN TEHRAN. FROM SECRET

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ACCOUNTS REACHING HIM, CHARGE SAID, IT SEEMED TO HAVE

BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY USEFUL MEETING DURING WHICH THERE HAD BEEN SERIOUS AND GENUINE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. AHMED RESPONDED THAT CENTO COMMUNIQUE HAD INDEED MADE SOME GOOD POINTS (REFERENCE TO INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF EACH MEMBER STATE, CALL FOR EARLY RELEASE OF PAK POWS, AND EMPHASIS ON COUNTER-SUBVERSION EFFORTS). AS FOR PAST EFFECTIVENESS, AHMED HAD AGREED WITH SECRETARY ROGERS THAT CENTO HAD BEEN ONE FACTOR HELPING TO PREVENT WAR BETWEEN THE MAJOR POWERS. BUT, AHMED WENT ON, FACT WAS THAT CENTO HAD NOT BEEN HELPFUL TO PAKISTAN DURING ITS TROUBLES IN 1965 AND 1971. HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD MADE IT CLEAR AT TEHRAN THAT CENTO WAS THOROUGHLY DISENCHANTED WITH CENTO'S PAST ROLE.

2. AHMED RECALLED THAT PEOPLE'S PARTY OF PRES BHUTTO HAD BEEN COMMITTED BY ITS MANIFESTO TO LEAVE CENTO. PARTY WAS UNDER ATTACK NOT ONLY FROM SOME ELEMENTS OF OPPOSITION (NOTABLY WALI KHAN OF NAP) BUT EVEN SOME MEMBERS OF PEOPLE'S PARTY ITSELF FOR HAVING REMAINED IN CENTO. AS FOR BHUTTO, HE HAD INDICATED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO KEEP PAKISTAN IN CENTO IF IT COULD BE SHOWN TO BE USEFUL TO PAKISTAN. SECRETARY ROGERS HAD EVINCED SOME CONCERN, AHMED VOLUNTEERED, WHEN AHMED HAD MADE SIMILAR POINT AT TEHRAN. SECRETARY HAD SAID HE HOPED THIS MATTER WOULD BE DISCUSSED DURING BHUTTO'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON. THE "ACID TEST", ACCORDING TO AHMED, IS WHETHER USG IS GOING OR NOT GOING TO GIVE PAKISTAN MILITARY AID. ANSWER THUS FAR HAS BEEN "NO." IF THAT REMAINS ANSWER, THEN PAKISTAN WILL PROBABLY NOT STAY IN CENTO. IT WOULD BE CLEAR THAT PAKISTAN WILL HAVE TO FEND FOR ITSELF. PAKISTAN HAS TO FACE FACT THAT SOVIETS WILL ACT IN THEIR OWN INTEREST AND THIS HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN.

3. CHARGE SAID HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT US VIEW OF CENTO WHICH HAD COME OUT AT RECENT TEHRAN MEETING: (A) WE BELIEVE CENTO HAS BEEN USEFUL AND IT CONTINUES TO SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE; (B) WE BELIEVE CENTO IS NOW MORE IMPORTANT FOR POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS TO PAKISTAN THAN IT HAS EVER

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BEEN; (C) US-PAK RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BY MUR CENTO TIE. A WEAKENING OR DISRUPTION IN THIS RELATIONSHIP COULD BE EXPECTED TO HAVE IMPACT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES; (D) WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IN CENTO'S INTEREST TO BECOME INVOLVED IN REGIONAL DISPUTES; (E) WE WELCOME GREATER EMPHASIS BEING GIVEN BY CENTO TO THREAT OF SUBVERSION; AND (F) IF PAKISTAN HAS ANY SPECIFIC IDEAS TO STRENGTHEN CENTO, WE ARE

WILLING TO CONSIDER THEM.

4. ON POINT JUST MADE BY

AHMED, CHARGE SAID IT WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR TO HIM HOW WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTO WOULD HELP PAKISTAN DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST SOVIETS. AHMED REPLIED THAT PAK MEMBERSHIP IN CENTO IS A DETERRENT TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH USSR. BUT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THREAT TO PAKISTAN CAME DIRECTLY FROM MILITARY ACTION BY SOVIETS AS MUCH AS IT DID THROUGH SOVIET COLLABORATION WITH INDIA. HE DID NOT BELIEVE GROWING US-SOVIET DETENTE WOULD ACTUALLY DETER USSR FROM MOVING TO DAMAGE PAKISTAN IF IT FELT THAT WAS IN ITS INTEREST. GOP WELCOMED US-SOV DETENTE GENERALLY BUT FEARED IT DID NOT OFFER EFFECTIVE BRAKE ON SOVIET COOPERATION WITH INDIA. AHMED CLAIMED THAT SOVIET MILITARY AID TO INDIA WAS INTENDED AGAINST PAKISTAN. IN HIS VIEW, SOVS GIVE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE TO PERSIAN GULF AND THEY CONSIDER PAKISTAN AS PART OF GULF AREA. IN ADDITION, SOVS RESENT PAKISTAN'S FRIENDSHIP WITH CHINA AND US.

5. CHARGE SAID THAT IN PROMISING DETENTE WITH USSR, USG IS NOT MAKING DEALS AT EXPENSE OF THIRD COUNTRIES. WE BELIEVE THAT, TO DETREE THAT GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE IMPROVES PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY IN SUB-CONTINENT, THIS IS ALL TO GOOD. AT SAME TIME, WE DO NOT BELIEVE SOVIETS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO ASSUME DOMINANT POSITION IN AREA AND WE WILL REMAIN VIGILANT. AHMED REMARKED THAT GOP COULD EASILY BELIEVE IN SUCH COMMENTS WHEN THEY EMANATE FROM USG. BUT IT DOES NOT BELIEVE IN GOOD INTENTIONS OF SOVIETS. HE THOUGHT DETENTE WITH US WOULD HELP USSR TO DISENGAGE FROM CERTAIN PROBLEMS WITH RESULT THAT IT COULD TURN ATTENTION MORE
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TO SOUTHERN ASIA. "THEY AIM TO EXTEND HEGEMONY OVER SOUTH ASIA." HE REFERRED TO CERTAIN MAPS WHICH SHOW AN EXPANDED, PROPOSED (FREE) BALUCHISTAN, WHICH HE INTERPRETED AS EVIDENCE OF MOSCOW'S DESIRE TO HAVE LAND ACCESS TO ARABIAN SEA. THIS WAS SYMPTOMATIC OF PROBLEM WHICH PAKISTAN HAD TO FACE.

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 EUR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9857

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 5319

LIMDIS

6. AHMED SAID HE ANTICIPATED FURTHER DISCUSSION THIS
SUBJECT DURING BHUTTO'S VISIT TO US.

7. COMMENT: AHMED'S HARD-LINE VIEWS ON SOVIET INTENTIONS
(AND ON SOVIET-INDIAN COLLABORATION) ARE WELL KNOWN TO
US. HE EXPRESSED NO NEW POSITIONS IN THIS CONVERSATION
ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT HE CHOSE TO
POINT OUT HIS VIEWS UNCHANGED DESPITE US-USSR EFFORT
TO REDUCE TENSIONS. WE ARE INCLINED BELIEVE THAT PRES
BHUTTO DOES NOT SHARE AHMED'S CONCERNS FULLY, AT LEAST
WITH SIMILAR STARKNESS AND INTENSITY. WE
ARE UNCERTAIN THAT BHUTTO WILL WISH MAKE EXTENSION
OF US MILITARY AID THE CONDITION FOR PAK CONTINUANCE
IN CENTO.
SOBER

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